

YOU OUGHT TO BE LEFT ALONE

MR. DIRKSEN. Mr. President, I have read and would like to call the Senate's attention to an article written by the distinguished Senator EDWARD V. LONG, of Missouri, which appeared in the May issue of Esquire. It is entitled "You Ought To Be Left Alone."

I ask unanimous consent that the article be printed in the Record at this point.

There being no objection, the article was ordered to be printed in the Record, as follows:

YOU OUGHT TO BE LEFT ALONE
(By Senator EDWARD V. LONG)

This is not an article about Brigitte Bardot, but rather about big brother. To my knowledge, no one ever tried seriously to curb Miss Bardot. It is certainly not a matter of great consequence, and most of us would want no part in such curbing activity. Big brother is a horse of an entirely different color. He should be curbed, but unfortunately very little effort is being made in that direction.

As most of you will recall, big brother was the "villain" in George Orwell's important book "1984," which was published in 1949. Big brother was the head of the government and the single political party that Orwell visualized in his prognostication for the year 1984. Big brother and his minions were omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent. By means of closed-circuit TV in every home and office, B.B. could keep a watch on everything every citizen said and did, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Nonconformist citizens were scrutinized with a view to particular vengeance.

When Orwell wrote his book, inexpensive and miniaturized closed-circuit TV was way out. It is not way out today. It is here, it is relatively cheap, and it is getting smaller every day. And, again unfortunately, it is available to anyone with the money to buy it. This latter point is something that even Orwell did not contemplate. In his conception, it was a single, central, bureaucratic, authoritarian government that did the spying and others were denied access to the spying gear. Today, however, we are permitting a proliferation of the devices to be manufactured and sold to anyone at all.

Spying is by no means new. It is something that man has had to endure since time immemorial. But until a very few years ago spies did not have the electronic gadgets to make snooping so easy, so complete, and so safe. Take as an example (from literally hundreds that could be cited) the bugging of an office by means of a 110-volt transmitter. The system consists of a transmitter which is attached to the regular 110-volt power system in the building. The transmitter is dropped down in the wall behind any electrical outlet; the screw that holds the wall plate to the outlet contains the microphone. Instead of transmitting through the air, the transmitter sends its signal back through the whole 110-volt system, which, incidentally, also provides all the power for the device * * * no batteries are necessary and it will operate almost forever, or until discovered (which may well be the same thing).

Is it easy to install? Yes. Only a minute or two is required.

Is it complete? Yes. It will overhear every sound made in the room.

Is it safe? Yes. The sound signal can be picked up by plugging a compatible receiver into any other electrical outlet in the building. Hence, the "listening post" is portable and flexible.

Is it difficult to detect? Yes. No signal goes either through the air or the telephone system, the mediums most frequently checked.

Is it inexpensive? Yes. Very. It is cheap

to buy, cheap to operate (no batteries), cheap to monitor.

The real problem here is one of chipping away. Our right to privacy (which, admittedly, is hard to define) is being rapidly chipped away. If something is not done to reverse the process, soon it will be gone. Once it is gone, chances of reestablishing it are minimal.

One of the main objectives of the hearings before my Subcommittee on Administrative Practice and Procedure is to try to ascertain who the big users of snooping gear are and what justification, if any, can be found for such use.

Although we cannot prove it (and won't even try), one of the very big users of wiretap and other electronic eavesdropping is the so-called security community (i.e., Central Intelligence Agency, Military Intelligence, National Security Agency, and, to some extent, the Federal Bureau of Investigation). It should be observed, however, that attempts are being made to place many nonsecurity situations under the "security umbrella."